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Sent: 7/26/2012 8:04:14 AM

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CC:
Subject: press and Cabot statement.

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Date: 07/25/2012 05:26 PM
Subject: Harrisburg Patriot-News - EPA says Dimock water is safe to drink

EPA says Dimock water is safe to drink

Published: Wednesday, July 25, 2012, 3:29 PM **Updated:** Wednesday, July 25, 2012, 4:12 PM

By **DONALD GILLILAND, The Patriot-News**

The water in Dimock is safe to drink.

That's the conclusion of the federal Environmental Protection Agency, which declared on Wednesday that well water in the Susquehanna County town is safe and requires no further testing. Dimock water has been the banner beneath which anti-fracking activists have marched since methane migrated into a local aquifer as a result of inadequate cementing on nearby natural gas wells drilled by Cabot Oil & Gas.

Some residents, however, have claimed there was more than just natural gas contaminating their water, and documentary filmmaker Josh Fox made Dimock the centerpiece of his controversial anti-fracking film "Gasland."

State environmental regulators said the water was fine, but the howl and cry from some of the residents and the national activists who supported them prompted the EPA to step in.

The EPA said Wednesday that sampling at five homes revealed naturally occurring arsenic, barium and manganese at levels that could present a health concern. In all cases, the agency said, "the residents have now or will have their own treatment systems that can reduce concentrations of those hazardous substances to acceptable levels at the tap."

In a statement, the EPA said it "has provided the residents with all of their sampling results and has no further plans to conduct additional drinking water sampling in Dimock."

The EPA also said it is no longer necessary to provide residents with alternative water and is working with residents on the schedule to disconnect the alternate water sources provided by EPA.

"Our goal was to provide the Dimock community with complete and reliable information about the presence of contaminants in their drinking water and to determine whether further action was warranted to protect public health," said EPA Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin. "The sampling and an evaluation of the particular circumstances at each home did not indicate levels of contaminants that would give EPA reason to take further action. Throughout EPA's work in Dimock, the Agency has used the best available scientific data to provide clarity to Dimock residents and address their concerns about the safety of their drinking water."

Between January and June 2012, EPA sampled private drinking water wells serving 64 homes. Craig and Julie Sautner, Dimock residents who were most critical of their water and most involved with trying to get EPA to come in and test, were not immediately available for comment. The gas industry breathed a sigh of relief, generally.

After sharply criticizing the EPA for stepping in in the first place, gas company officials said Wednesday's announcement was final confirmation of what they've known all along.

Cabot spokesman George Stark said, "the data released today once again confirms the EPA's and DEP's findings that levels of contaminants found do not possess a threat to human health and the environment. These findings are consistent with thousands of pages of water quality data previously accumulated by state and local authorities and by Cabot Oil & Gas. As with the other findings, EPA did not indicate that those contaminants that were detected bore any relationship to oil and gas development in the Dimock area.

"Cabot's operations in Dimock have led to significant economic growth in the area, marked by a collaborative relationship with the local community. Cabot will continue to cooperate with federal, state and local officials in using the best and most accurate science to address public concerns."

Kathryn Klaber, president of the Marcellus Shale Coalition, the leading industry group in Pennsylvania, said, "We are very pleased that EPA has arrived upon these fact-based findings, and that we're now able to close this chapter once and for all."

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Date: 07/25/2012 05:31 PM

Subject: CABOT ISSUES STATEMENT ON EPA DATA AND DECISION

CABOT ISSUES STATEMENT ON EPA DATA AND DECISION

"Today, the US Environmental Protection Agency released data from a second, confirmatory set of water samples from its testing in Dimock, PA. EPA also announced that it would cease deliveries to residents currently receiving water from EPA because the agency 'determined that it is no longer necessary to provide residents with alternative water.'

As with the three previous sets of water samples compiled by EPA at private drinking water wells in Dimock, PA, the data released today once again confirms the EPA's and DEP's findings that levels of contaminants found do not possess a threat to human health and the environment. These findings are consistent with thousands of pages of water quality data previously accumulated by state and local authorities and by Cabot Oil & Gas. As with the other findings, EPA did not indicate that those contaminants that were detected bore any relationship to oil and gas development in the Dimock area. Cabot's operations in Dimock have led to significant economic growth in the area, marked by a collaborative relationship with the local community. Cabot will continue to cooperate with federal, state and local officials in using the best and most accurate science to address public concerns."

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EPA Approves Town's Water After Fracking Fear

By **TENNILLE TRACY**

The Environmental Protection Agency has given the all-clear to drinking water in Dimock, Pa., a tiny town that received national attention after people there voiced concern about contamination from hydraulic fracturing. In a statement Wednesday, the EPA said it conducted sampling of drinking-water wells that served 64 homes and didn't find any contaminants that would require further action by the agency.

"Throughout EPA's work in Dimock, the agency has used the best available scientific data to provide clarity to Dimock residents and address their concerns about the safety of their drinking water," EPA Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin said in a statement.

Dimock, featured in the documentary film "Gasland," has been a flash point in the broader debate over hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking," a process used to create seams in rocks and unlock the natural gas trapped inside. Public-health advocates and environmental groups have said the process is inherently risky and poses a risk to drinking water across the country.

The Dimock area had been the site of natural-gas drilling by Cabot Oil & Gas Corp. When the EPA first said earlier this year that it would look into possible contamination, Cabot said the agency's actions were politically motivated.

"Cabot's operations in Dimock have led to significant economic growth in the area, marked by a collaborative relationship with the local community," the company said in a statement Wednesday. "Cabot will continue to cooperate with federal, state and local officials in using the best and most accurate science to address public concerns."

In 2010, Cabot agreed to pay \$4.6 million to Pennsylvania regulators and 19 rural households whose drinking water was contaminated by the company's nearby natural-gas-drilling activities, according to state officials.

The EPA didn't offer a view on whether Cabot's drilling may have caused contamination in years past. It said its findings were exclusively based on samples taken this year. Cabot has maintained that its drilling wasn't responsible for contamination.

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Date: 07/26/2012 07:32 AM

Subject: Scranton Times-Tribune (7-26) EPA to stop Dimock Twp. water deliveries

EPA to stop Dimock Twp. water deliveries

By Laura Legere (Staff Writer)

Published: July 26, 2012

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will end water deliveries to four homes in Dimock Township after a repeat round of sampling found that elevated manganese in one water well could be treated to safe levels.

The announcement Wednesday ends the agency's sampling effort in the Susquehanna County township where past tests raised concerns that nearby Marcellus Shale drilling may have

contaminated water supplies and created a health risk.

The EPA's tests found no contamination "that would give EPA reason to take further action," Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin said in a statement.

The EPA said its testing of wells serving 64 homes between January and June found the hazardous substances arsenic, barium or manganese in well water at five homes at levels that could present a health concern.

But the agency said that in each of those cases the residents currently have or will have a treatment system that can treat the contaminants to acceptable levels at the tap. It also noted that those contaminants, which it has said can be associated with natural gas drilling, "are also naturally occurring substances."

The state Department of Environmental Protection determined in 2009 that faulty gas wells drilled by Cabot Oil and Gas Corp. allowed methane to seep into 18 Dimock water supplies, but the EPA began its own sampling this year after the agency's review of past test results raised concerns about additional contamination.

Cabot contends that the methane and other contaminants in Dimock water wells are natural phenomena unrelated to its operations.

"As with the three previous sets of water samples compiled by EPA at private drinking water wells in Dimock, the data released today once again confirms the EPA's and DEP's findings that levels of contaminants found do not possess a threat to human health and the environment," Cabot spokesman George Stark said in a statement.

The EPA said it is working with residents at the four homes where it has been delivering replacement water on a schedule to disconnect the alternate water supplies.

Scott Ely, one of the homeowners receiving deliveries, said he has been told by several consultants that the high pH level in his water would make it expensive to treat.

"I have no plans; I have no system," he said. EPA's repeated tests of his water found arsenic, chromium, lithium and sodium above a level flagged for a toxicologist's review. He said that the EPA representative who delivered his most recent test results told him "off the record" not to drink or bathe in his water, but that the agency will remove the bulk water tank at his home by Aug. 6.

In a written response to questions, the EPA said its staff "did not have any 'off the record' conversations with residents" and that its risk assessors "thoroughly reviewed all sampling results, comparing them to risk-based levels, and concluded that none of the levels presented a health concern."

Jean Carter, whose grandchildren live in two homes connected to a single water supply with high levels of methane and manganese, said that while a treatment system reduces the metal in the water, she needs another system to remove the gas.

"It's a real mess," she said, "and we just don't know what to do because it takes so much money to do these things."

The natural gas industry welcomed the EPA announcement as the last word on the agency's investigation, which it had criticized as an intrusion in a matter typically regulated by the state.

"We are very pleased that EPA has arrived upon these fact-based findings," Marcellus Shale Coalition president Kathryn Klaber said, "and that we're now able to close this chapter once and for all."

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